

St. Louis River Area of Concern

Projects in partnership to restore the river and revitalize the community

Restoring Piping Plover Habitat



Joel Trick



Plovers need large isolated beaches to raise their young.



BN Singh



US Fish & Wildlife Service

Purpose

- Restore nesting habitat for the endangered piping plover.
- Address the Degraded Fish and Wildlife Populations Impairment in the St. Louis River Area of Concern.

Piping plovers were added to Wisconsin's endangered species list in 1979, and listed as federally endangered in 1986. They became endangered due to:

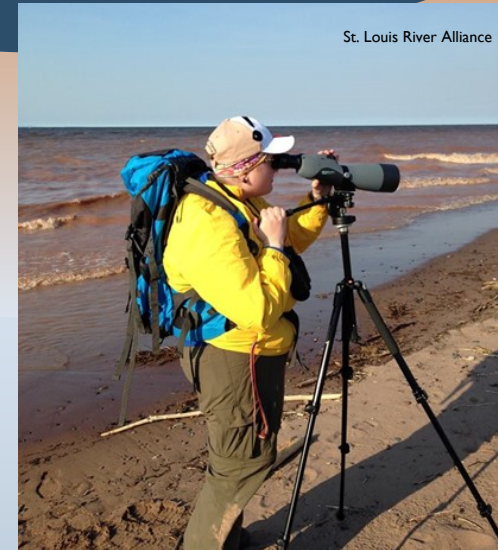
- hunting,
- habitat loss,
- shoreline development,
- recreational pressure.

Restoring piping plover nesting habitat here will provide critical habitat to help the US Fish and Wildlife Service meet their [Great Lakes Piping Plover Recovery Goal](#).

Background

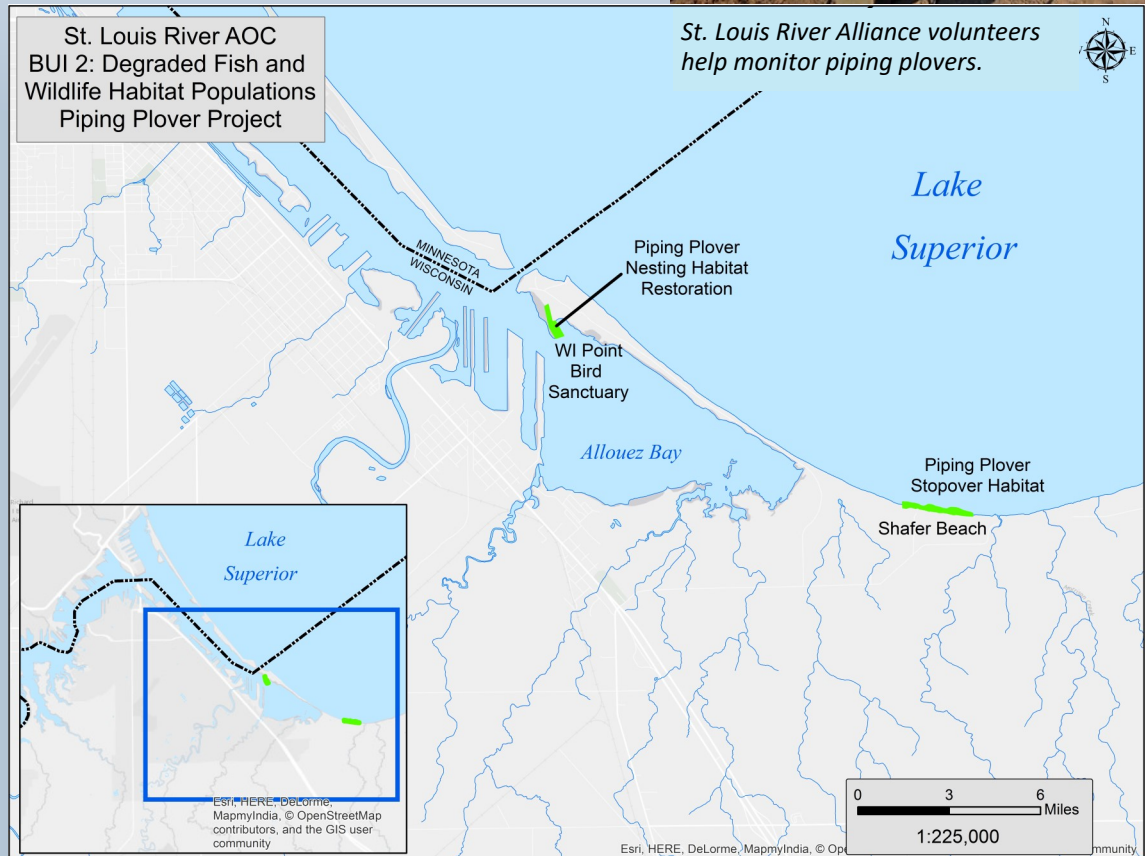
The habitat restoration site is located on the northeast end of the point at the Wisconsin Point Bird Sanctuary site owned by the Department of Natural Resources. This site has been identified by experts as having good potential for re-colonization by piping plovers because:

- suitable habitat can be maintained here,
- this area historically supported breeding populations of plovers, and
- as plover numbers are improving in other areas of the Great Lakes, they are looking for more nesting habitat.



St. Louis River Alliance

St. Louis River Alliance volunteers help monitor piping plovers.



Status

The project design creates ~14 acres of open sand and cobble beach suitable for piping plover nesting and foraging habitat.

The beach will be constructed with clean sand available in the Duluth-Superior Harbor, which needs to be dredged to improve commercial shipping navigation. This is a good opportunity to beneficially use dredge material to restore habitat for an endangered species. The clean dredge material will be placed to:

- extend the existing shoreline and stabilize the slope from erosion,
- widen the existing spit to encourage long-term connectivity, and
- create new beach between the existing spit and the tern nesting crib to provide nesting habitat.

Other proposed project features include cobble placement to enhance habitat, native dune grass restoration and a fence upgrade to deter predators. A long term habitat management plan will also be developed to maintain suitable nesting habitat.

Design was completed in winter of 2018, with construction planned for summer/fall of 2019.

Partners

- City of Superior
- Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
- St. Louis River Alliance
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- UW Sea Grant



Office of Great Waters



To Learn More

Visit <http://dnr.wi.gov>, search “[St. Louis River AOC](#).”

US Fish and Wildlife Service: <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/Endangered/pipingplover/>

For more information, contact:

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